

To the Pope:

My name is and I am the father of one of the two Choir boys sexually assaulted by George Pell.

My son died of a drug overdose in 2014. I would like you to read an excerpt from my Victim Impact Statement and to consider the questions that follow:

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT.

I had a son, a nice kid, keen to learn to cook, to help others, to be involved, to play sport, visit his grandparents, until he became a stranger due to drugs.

At first we did not know he was using, he hid it for a while, but his behaviour changed, he became anti-social, and had problems at school. He was coming and going at all hours of the day, unusual behaviour for a 14 year old. Talking to him was hopeless, he would not engage and would refuse to discuss anything.

The whole situation caused a huge strain between my then wife and myself, it impacted on our marriage, our home life, and my work life. Eventually my marriage ended.

My son died of a drug overdose 2 days after coming out of his last jail term.

We never knew the real reason he took drugs and behaved the way he did from the time he was in his early teens.

16 months after his death, I was contacted by someone from the Sano Task Force, I was shocked and upset to be told that my son had been named as a victim of child sexual abuse.

As a Catholic, I felt betrayed by the Church, but as a parent I felt like a failure, I felt as if I failed my son and my family, and I still feel that way today.

This has also had a huge impact on my current relationship with my second wife.

The grief of losing a child is something that you never really get over. It is always there in the back of my mind – did I fail my son? Did I miss anything? Could I have stopped him taking drugs if I had tried harder? Did I ask the right questions?

The hurt never goes away and I cry a lot over the loss of my son.

I will always miss the innocent little choir boy that was my son, such a tragic waste of a beautiful boy whose life became a nightmare for himself and those around him.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why does the church insist on celibacy for the clergy when it so obvious – and has been proven – that it does not work. It is incomprehensible in this day and age to deny men the opportunity to engage in what is a natural act. Denial has forced many of them to pursue innocent children.
2. Why has Pell kept his title as cardinal?
3. Why have you not defrocked him and stripped him of his status within the church?
4. What is the status of your investigation into Pell's behaviour?
5. Why has the church disregarded the testimonies of so many victims of the clergy?
6. Why have you not instructed Pell to drop his appeal and admit his guilt? He has been found guilty by a jury in a court of law in Australia.
7. Why are women excluded from the clergy?